

Message Text

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CIEP-02 COME-00 DODE-00 EB-07 FPC-01 H-02 INR-07

INT-05 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 OMB-01 PM-03 RSC-01 SAM-01

OES-05 SP-02 SS-15 STR-04 TRSE-00 FRB-01 PA-02 PRS-01

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SUBJ : FURTHER REACTION TO SECRETARY'S BUSINESS WEEK
INTERVIEW

REF : LAGOS 0245

1. PAST WEEK HAS SEEN GROWING NUMBER OF EDITORIALS IN NIGERIAN PRESS REACTING CRITICALLY TO SECRETARY KISSINGER'S BUSINESS WEEK INTERVIEW. SUBSEQUENT TO EDITIRIAL REPORTED REFTEL, SUCH PAPERS AS CHRONICLE (OWNED BY SOUTH-EASTERN STATE GOVERNMENT) AND OBSERVER (OWNED BY MID-WESTERN STATE GOVERNMENT) HAVE TAKEN LEAD IN ATTACKING SECRETARY'S REMARKS ON "HYPOTHETICAL" POSSIBILITY OF USING MILITARY FORCE IN OIL EMERGENCY. THESE TEXTS, ALREADY REPORTED BY USINFO, HAVE LARGELY ECHOED TIMES INTERNATIONAL CHARGES OF "GUN-BOAT DIPLOMACY" AND CALLED FOR CONTINUING OPEC SOLIDARITY IN FACE OF WHAT IS PERCEIVED TO BE USG THREAT.

2. PRESIDENT FORD'S TIME MAGAZINE INTERVIEW REITERATING POSITION STATED BY SECRETARY HAS PROVOKED TWO FRESH EDITORIALS
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IN JANUARY 15 NIGERIAN PRESS, ONE IN OBSERVER AND ONE IN

EAST-CENTRAL STATE GOVERNMENT-OWNED RENAISSANCE. OBSERVER NOTES THAT PRESIDENTIAL ENDORSEMENT MEANS THAT "ISSUED SHOULD BE TAKEN SERIOUSLY". CHARGING USG WITH LACK OF "MORALITY" OBSERVER ASKS RHETORICALLY WHY AMERICANS CANNOT SEEK TO NEGOTIATE DESIRED CHANGES IN INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC ORDER AS DEVELOPING COUNTRIES HAD ALWAYS SOUGHT TO DO THROUGH UNCTAD AND SIMILAR BODIES.

AFTER CHARGING THAT "AMERICA'S ODIUS REPUTATION IN HER FOREIGN RELATIONS IS ENOUGH TO MAKE HER DO SOME RETHINKING WITHOUT ADDING TO AN ALREADY LONG LIST OF INTERNATIONAL CRIMES", EDITORIAL CONCLUDES BY URGING FMG AND OPEC TO STAND FAST AGAINST "ALL JUVENILE ATTEMPTS TO INTIMIDATE MEMBER COUNTRIES INTO SPURIOUS DEALS OVER OIL PRICES".

3. RENAISSANCE, USING EQUALLY STRONG LANGUAGE, REFERS TO US THREAT AS "BULLY'S ARROGANCE" AND "PLAIN SAVAGERY". EDITORIAL NOTES THAT OIL PRODUCING COUNTRIES HAVE MERELY TURNED TABLES ON DEVELOPED COUNTRIES WHICH PREVIOUSLY HELD UPPER HAND, AND ARGUES THAT "ONLY SENSIBLE OPTION" FOR USG IS NEGOTIATION RATHER THAN "INTIMIDATION AND BLACKMAIL". LIKE OBSERVER, RENAISSANCE CONCLUDES THAT OIL NATIONS "MUST DEMONSTRATE THEIR DETERMINATION TO SURVIVE OR PERISH TOGETHER" AS ONLY WAY TO "CALL AMERICAN BLUFF".

4. SIMILAR VIEWS CONTAINED IN JANUARY 14 "NEWSTALK" ON NBC RADIO, WHICH WARNED THAT "BLACKMAIL" ATTEMPTS AGAINST OPEC COUNTRIES ARE DOOMED TO FAILURE. COMMENTATOR WARNED THAT IN A WORLD "DIVIDED INTO TWO IDEOLOGIES", THIRD WORLD COUNTRIES THREATENED BY "AGGRESSION" WOULD RECEIVE HELP "FROM OTHER VARIOUS QUARTERS".

5. IN PRIVATE CONVERSATIONS, EVEN JOURNALISTS NORMALLY SYMPATHETIC TO US HAVE DISPLAYED UNUSUAL DEGREE OF ANGER AND CONCERN OVER REMARKS BY SECRETARY AND PRESIDENT. WE THUS CAN PROBABLY EXPECT FURTHER SPATE OF EDITORIAL REACTIONS ON THIS SUBJECT.
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